

PHRYME.

STUDYING IN VENEZUELA:

**HAROLD
FUENMAYOR**

+

THE TWIN TAKEOVER:

**NATHALY &
NICOLE RAS**

+

**"PEOPLE SEEM TO
FORGET THE IMPORTANCE
OF CELEBRATING THEIR
OWN ACHIEVEMENTS."**

LIFE OF NICOLL MIRA IN COSTA RICA

**"THE CHARM OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN CALLED
TO MY ADVENTUROUS
SELF AND I COULDN'T
REFUSE."**

SINTHYA RIDDERSTAAT

**ANTHONY
RIDDERSTAAT**

UNIVERSITY OF CURAÇAO GRADUATE

This year, the bursalen flights were simply overbooked.

**THERE ARE THREE SIDES TO EVERY STORY -
HIS, HERS AND THE TRUTH.**

Ulrich Sue Ann

JACOBS

KELLY

And the disorganization of their flight arrangements in Aruba.

Phryme.

MAGAZINE

— “Exclusively on expatriate students.” —



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WHERE ARE WE?

The Hague is a city in The Netherlands and also the capital of the province of South Holland. It is the only big city in the Netherlands that lies on the Noordzee.

The government and also the royal house are also located in the center of The Hague and even though The Hague is not the capital of The Netherlands, it sure serves as that title. The Hague also holds almost all the international embassies and ministries.

As of March 2017, The Hague has 526.436 inhabitants, out of which approximately 37.000 are students.

But what makes The Hague such a sensational city for students?





For students, The Hague has two university campuses and six universities of applied sciences. Among those universities are The Hague University of Applied Sciences, Delft University Campus The Hague, Leiden University Campus The Hague, InHolland university of Applied Sciences and Hotelschool The Hague.

Below are listed some of the programs you can follow at the institutions in The Hague:

- *Hospitality, Hotel Management and Tourism;*
- *Economics, Business Market and Finance;*
- *Communication and Marketing;*
- *Justice, Law and Safety;*
- *Politics, Governance and Diplomacy.*

Besides education, you can also follow courses on Peace, Justice or Governance and Leadership.

Something really good that students love about The Hague is its proximity to almost everything. The Hague is very close to other student cities such as Leiden, Delft, Rotterdam, Utrecht and even Amsterdam is to be reached within an hour. Living in The Hague then means that you can travel easily from the two airports that are very close by. Who doesn't love traveling as a student?

The city of The Hague has a lot to offer its students, such as cosy pubs, bars and restaurants, festivals & events, sports and an endless museum opportunities. The Hague has approximately 30 high top quality museums. One Museum you definitely should visit is the Mauritshuis, it has wide variety of famous Dutch masterpieces, such as the Girl with a Pearl Earring painted by Johannes Vermeer. If you're a lover of museums, it is highly recommended that you get a Museum card, this is an annual membership card that gives you reduced to even free access to about 400 museums across the Netherlands.



If you decide to come to come to The Hague, whether it is to study, the city may seem small, but it is grand in all the things that there are to do there.

THERE ARE JUST A FEW:

- Zip-line down the pier of Scheveningen;
- Visit the TINK winter event in December where the whole city is turned into a winter paradise;
- Madurodam: a whole miniature park of the Netherlands;
- The Peace Palace;
- Binnenhof: Political heart of the Netherlands, and last but not least;
- Mauritshuis: Museum National treasures side by side. here you'll find Johannes Vermeer's Girl with the Pearl Earring that hangs alongside masterpieces by Rembrandt, Rubens and Jan Steen.



ANTHONY RIDDERSTAAT:

BIG BOYS DON'T CRACK UNDER PRESSURE.

Anthony, 29, was born and raised on the beautiful island of Aruba, where he enjoys spending time outdoors, going to the beach and boat rides and loved to travel and get to know other cultures. Anthony describes himself as being someone adventurous and curious, because whenever he travels, instead of going on shopping sprees or relaxing, he would rather go out into the nature and try other countries foods.

In an open Q&A with Anthony, he gives an insight on how his parents and friends influenced his study decisions and where he is now.

ANTHONY'S EDUCATIONAL CAREER.

Anthony describes his childhood as very mischievous! Being an only child, Anthony was a little trouble maker at school; the only thing he thought about was playing – he didn't pay much attention in class, which contributed to poor results.

After elementary school, Anthony attended Educacion Professional Basico [EPB]. During his first week at EPB, Anthony knew that he will need to work very hard in order to prove people wrong and that he can do better than how he used to do.

It took Anthony just a year to succeed and transfer to the highest level of education at the school. After 4 years of hard work at EPB, Anthony attended Educacion Professional Intermedio [EPI], a vocational school, where he continued with his studies in Electrical Engineering.



Since Anthony liked to push himself to be better at anything he does, he initially planned to continue with his studies in the Netherlands. However, when he brought the news home, his parents weren't happy about it; it was hard for them to wrap their head around the idea that he will be far away and they were afraid.

After much deliberation, Anthony decided to attend the University of Curacao [UoC]. From the 4 students who started UoC together with Anthony, he was the only one who successfully graduated with his Bachelor's degree in Engineering in July of 2017, following many hard work, perseverance and self-confidence. Anthony described his University years as "very tough," and stated that,

"You should push yourself, believe in yourself and work hard although under pressure."

- **PEOPLE OFTEN HAVE A NEGATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF STUDENTS THAT ATTEND EPB. WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY IN RESPECT TO THAT?**

Simply put – it's NOT the school. It's the students, the trouble makers, that attend the school that gives the school a bad image. EPB is a very good school, especially the teachers! Anthony has dealt with many people that had something negative to say about the school, but he firmly believes that the key to dealing with those people is to simply believe in your abilities, strengths and always be neutral with them.

"The final decision is in your own hands if you are going to let people influence you or if you are going to keep striving to be a better version of yourself."

To date, Anthony has many teachers from elementary school and EPB that contact him to express how proud they are of him from beating the odds and achieving his goals.



ANTHONY TODAY

Anthony is working as a Bio-medical Engineer for a company in Curacao that distributes medical equipment and laboratory machinery services for the entire Caribbean. Anthony gets the opportunity of travelling to various places to attend specialized trainings in order to gain knowledge of current medical machinery on the market.

He describes his job as being different every day, with new challenges and problems that requires him to put theory from his education into practice. Working with these machines are of high importance – the life of people depend on these machines.

WHERE DOES ANTHONY SEE HIMSELF IN THE FUTURE?

Anthony firmly believes that he would be a greater Bio-medical Engineer. He hopes to encourage more people to join this field because, although it's a relatively "new" thing, it's very interesting. The demand for Bio-medical Engineers are very high and people don't really realize that this field plays a vital role in the medical world.

Oftentimes, when people hear the word "hospital" or "laboratory", they think about doctors and nurses. But, people fail to realize that doctors are not able to deliver a patients result without the machinery.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU?

"The more I travel the world, the more I realize that growing up in Aruba, and living now in Curacao, we are truly blessed and we like to complain about everything."

What motivates Anthony in general is to always stay humble and appreciate everything you have. Now, what motivates him in his career is to save lives.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS MEAN TO YOU?

"For me, success means when a person is determined. With the support of my parents, self-determination and willingness to push hard and to never giving up, I consider myself successful."



- **WHAT WOULD YOU ADVISE STUDENTS WHO WISH TO STUDY ABROAD?**

Always believe in yourself, always believe that you can do it, be persistent, don't let naysayers bring you down and, if in any case you fall down, be sure to get yourself back up and keep on going. In my case, I always told myself, "Big boys don't crack under pressure." Whenever I felt like I was running low on motivation, I told myself that quote and I felt like the force within me awakens.

Always look within yourself, find your personal motto and, whenever you feel like giving up, just repeat your personal motto to yourself and stick to it.



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12 *Living* DANISHLY

Acountry I was intrigued by and have wanted to experience its culture for a long time - Denmark. When I had to choose a country to go abroad as a part of my studies, there was no doubt that Denmark would be my first choice. Luckily, I was chosen to study one semester at The International Business Academy in Kolding, in the south of Denmark.

Many people have asked me why I have chosen Denmark; why would I move to a country where it's cold and rainy for most part of the year? What intrigued me so much was the Danish happiness. For many years, Denmark has been rated one of the world's happiest country. I was curious to experience Danish happiness and to understand how the people from such a small country, with long depressing winters, can be so happy.

Prior to moving to Denmark, I had little knowledge about the culture and its people, besides having high standards of living and an extensive and expensive welfare system. In fact, I considered Danes to be closed-off and reserved when connecting with other people. With time, I understood that Danes appreciate their privacy and give this privacy in return. It is why your neighbours will not start a conversation with you or that people do not greet the bus chauffeur when entering a bus. It is simply that Danes do not want to make you feel like they are invading your privacy.

Another thing I've noticed that is very private to Danes - ambition; it's hidden in Denmark because it suggests that you want to be better than someone else. In an equal society such as Denmark, it is considered to be bad manners.

It's definitely not easy to connect with a Dane at first. However, as soon as you build trust, you will create life-long relationship with Danes; trust is something of up-most importance in Denmark. It's such a trusting country





that parents will leave their babies in strollers outside of a store or restaurant when they go inside. The first time I saw this, I was so surprised that I stood 10 minutes next to the stroller to wait for someone to pick the baby up. I later realized that Danes are so trusting of one another that they believe citizens will do no bad to each other. Plus, it allows for the babies to get some fresh air.

Danes also have great trust in the state. Even though Danes are among the top highest tax payers in the world, they are happy with this because they trust the state will take care of them, if anything would go wrong with their jobs, health, etc.



To truly understand Danish happiness, you would need to understand Danish hygge. Hygge is difficult to describe, it is a concept or a feeling deeply embedded in the Danish culture and language. Hygge is an atmosphere created; it can be compared to the Dutch "gezellig" however, it is more than that. Hygge is not defined by a place, but by what atmosphere the place has to offer. Hygge is for everybody and there are no rules. The only rule is that it must feel good, it has to be hyggeligt. To get hygge into your life is to get the best out of it by generating a relaxed and intimate atmosphere in most of what you do. Hygge can be found anywhere; at home, work, in social clubs or simply by reading a book and having tea on a cold winter day. I find hygge by having delicious Danish pastries in a cozy environment together with great company.

Denmark may not be the most exciting place to live in. However, I do very much enjoy living Danishly. It is cozy, full of happiness, feels like home and has many delicious pastries. It is very hygge!

THE “PURA VIDA” OF NICOLL MIRA.

Meet Luisa Nicoll Mira a Colombian-born student who, at just 23, is pursuing her dream of becoming a general practitioner. She currently lives and studies in Costa Rica – a country known as one of the happiest place on earth. However, this is certainly not the first time that Nicoll had moved away from a place she used to call, “Home.” In fact, when she was just eleven years old, while living with her grandmother in Medellín Colombia, Nicoll decided that it was time to reunite with her parents who had been living in Aruba for quite some time already. A move that was not easy, but necessary. Fast-forward to over twelve years later, she is once again living away from home chasing her childhood dream of becoming a medical professional.



MOVE #1 - COLOMBIA TO ARUBA

Moving to Aruba was anything but a piece of cake, especially for someone who had lived with her beloved grandmother since birth, “You know, it was a very long process and certainly not an easy one. I first tried to move to the island when I was eight, but because the required documents were not completed on time, I had to return to Colombia.” After this exhausting and unsuccessful process, Nicoll continued and finished her studies in Colombia until she was finally able to reunite with her parents in Aruba at the age of eleven. When she first arrived back on the island, it was like magic, as she explained,

I couldn't believe I was finally able to live in such a beautiful country - I was finally able to live in Paradise!

Nicoll had immediately fallen in love, not only with the tranquility of Aruba, but also with its exceptionally beautiful beaches. She also felt safe again to play outside or to casually go out for a walk, simple activities that took her around four months to adjust to since her big move. However, when asked about how long it took her to learn Papiamento, Dutch and English, Nicoll replied, “From the moment I realized that I would be staying on the island, I made it my personal mission to learn all three languages, and I managed to do so in just three to four months.” Of course, perfecting her ability to speak, write, and understand Papiamento, English, and Dutch took a little more time, but it was something she was determined to get done – and effort meant everything to Nicoll. Undeniably, after eight years of hard work and dedication, Nicoll managed to successfully obtain her High School degree, in Dutch! Today, she is still enormously proud of where she comes from but Nicoll says that her heart belongs to Aruba, and when speaking about home it will always be Aruba.

MOVE #2 - ARUBA TO COSTA RICA

For some, moving just once in their lifetime is a pretty big deal – but to Nicoll, it did not matter what it took to pursue her childhood dream, even if it meant leaving everything behind and moving to yet another country, “I always knew that, at some point in my life, I would end up in Costa Rica or anywhere in this particular region, because most of the doctors I have met also studied in this area.” However, unlike the first time she had moved away from home, Nicoll realized that she would be, sort of, on her own,

When I first got here, I moved into a family home; meaning that I needed to adapt and respect the family's household rules.

A family home with people who have known each other for years, and then her – a newbie who, not only found herself speaking Spanish again, but also living under the roof of people she had absolutely no clue of, “The problem is not that I was living on my own, it was about not having my loved ones around anymore.” Sooner than she had anticipated, Nicoll found herself stepping outside of her comfort zone to do things like grocery shopping, cooking and cleaning. You know, typical things students learn to do when they start transitioning into responsible young adults. Another move also meant adapting to a completely new educational system, which brought additional challenges that Nicoll knew she had to overcome,

Of course I expected a different education system, but Costa Rica was such a popular destination among aspiring medical students that I needed to swallow my pride and accept that my life is about to take a completely new turn.

When asked what she likes most about Costa Rica, Nicoll quickly forgot about the challenges she has faced in the beginning and could not stop smiling. She explains that the culture, the people, and the social diversity of the great country is definitely worth experiencing. However, the chaotic traffic and insanely expensive lifestyle remain a daily struggle for her.

Nevertheless, Costa Rica is undeniably a beautiful country, but Nicoll believes that every Aruba student should know it is not cheap to live there – at least not for someone who greatly depends on student loans, as she explains, “Food... especially food is overpriced here, even if you cook at home.” So for those that would like to live and study in Costa Rica, you might want to start asking your parents if they are able to assist you financially.



THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

It has been a total of three years since Nicoll first arrived in Costa Rica and, though there are plenty more to go, she is as motivated and driven to obtain her medical degree. Concerning her plans after graduation, Nicoll emphasized that a huge celebration is a must, “The first thing I would do after receiving my degree is celebrating of course. This translates into lots of drinking and partying, because people seem to forget the importance of celebrating their own achievements.” As soon as she recovers from this celebration, she would probably continue with her specialization either in Canada or Europe. On whether Nicoll will return to Aruba in the near future remains something unknown; it depends on whether the island’s healthcare system permits those who had studied in Costa Rica to practice their work in Aruba.

Furthermore, Nicoll shares her advice for students that are still deliberating whether to do a study abroad or not, “Listen, you have to do it because the experience is incredible. You will grow, you will learn to become independent, and you will value yourself even more.” However, she strongly believes that it is crucial for students to do a proper research before deciding on a program and to estimate how much everything will cost – tuition fee, rent, food, and so forth.

In the end, Nicoll’s story teaches us that sometimes in life you have to be brave, even if it means having to leave everything behind. In fact, she already did it twice – and she would most certainly do it again. Prior to concluding the interview, she shares her favorite quote, “Never regret a day in your life – good days give happiness and bad days give memories”.

16 “As an adult, I WAS HOMESICK.”

At the age of 24 I finally decided to move to the Netherlands and continue my study. At first, I was super excited and looking forward to a new adventure and then I checked in to my flight and regretted the decision I just made I cried like someone had died. But once I arrived the excitement was back, everything around me was new and exciting, I made new friends and explored different cities in the Netherlands. But once I settled into my life and got a routine started it hit me, as a grown woman I was feeling homesick. Once I realized this I started to look for ways to handle being homesick without giving up everything and moving back home. Here's the 3 most helpful things I found and the 2 least helpful.

HELPFUL.

1 It turns out that when you're homesick, you're not missing your literal house. Instead, you're missing the things that were normal for you. Basically, you're having trouble adjusting to your new surroundings. This helped me personally, because it made me realize that I was not being dramatic about missing home and that I was just having trouble adjusting. Realizing the source of the feeling helped me create a routine similar to the one I had at home; which helped me get through the days when I was missing home.

2 Something else that helped me was reaching out to loved ones. After all, I was missing them, so I decided to make an effort to stay in touch and talk about me feeling homesick, instead of pretending everything was always fine. This managed to give them the opportunity to support me through my homesickness.

3 The best advice I got came from an article I read by Kristin Wong. What stuck with me was when I read about idealizing your old life. See, this is exactly what I had been doing; I loved my old job, my friends and colleagues. So, when I moved, I put them on a pedestal – nothing in my new life could compare. While in reality, just like anyone, my friends and colleagues had their faults too and my job wasn't always all that fabulous. I had to let go of my nostalgia and learn to appreciate the new people and opportunities I was being presented with.

UNHELPFUL.

1 The least helpful thing that I was told was to just, "Get over it." I was already feeling down, why would you tell me to get over it? IS what I'm feeling not a valid emotion?

2 Something else I was told was to, "Stop playing the victim, you made the choice to move." While it was my choice to move, and I am happy with where I am right now, I am also entitled to miss what I left behind.



So, if you're feeling homesick, remember that you're still adjusting to a new life. Reach out to your loved ones and don't idealize your old life. Give yourself the opportunity to enjoy everything your new surroundings have to offer.



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HAROLD AÑEZ FUENMAYOR:

PUSHING THROUGH THE CHAOS *of* VENEZUELA



HAROLD DISCOVERS HIS PASSION:

Harold José Añez Fuenmayor, 23, recently graduated as a Spanish teacher in a country that CNN recently reported that is "Moving deeper into crisis." For the last four years, Venezuela has found itself in a social-economic crisis. The quality of living is unkind; from not being able of finding food in stores, medicines not being available in drugstores, to the crime rate escalating to twice as high as reported in 2013. Most people would ask themselves, "Why would an Aruban student, with plenty of education options, choose Venezuela to continue their studies?" In this article, Harold opens up about his years at IPA [Instituto Pedagogico Arubano], his decision to move to Venezuela and most importantly, finding his passion for giving back to the community.

After completing Colegio Arubano at the age of sixteen, Harold found himself with the decision of, "What should I do now?" Harold was relatively young at the time, he didn't feel ready to move abroad to continue his studies. His thoughts about living abroad wasn't the most positive, he thought it was too hard to handle, so he enrolled at IPA to pursue his dream to become a teacher. He shared how his interest in teaching has been there all along and how, from a young age, Harold would sit down with his parents and pretend to be their teacher. It was clear to him that teaching was the study he wanted to pursue. He always had an interest in helping others to understand and helping them grow, not only professionally but also personally.

Harold says that his experience at IPA was generally a positive one; he learned a lot and had teachers he describes as being, "Prepared and knowledgeable in their specific subject." But that wasn't good enough because, two years later, Harold decided to drop out of IPA. This decision was mutual; some of Harold's teachers would tell him that teaching wasn't for him, "I know some of them still have that opinion nowadays." Harold was also the youngest in his class, with his classmates being more than fifteen years older than him, Harold felt like he was the baby of the group.

"I will never say that my two years at IPA were wasted. Those two years were meant for me to grow up and become more mature."

Regardless of his then-teachers' opinion, Harold felt that he had to grow up and become more mature. Therefore, he decided to pursue his dream in another place – he wasn't going to let those mean and unnecessary comments break his spirit, "Remembering those comments pushed me even more to prove people wrong."

WHAT NOW?

It was clear for Harold that things had to change. He recalls making the decision to move abroad to pursue his studies while on a vacation trip and so he did. After dropping out of IPA, Harold decided to move to Venezuela to continue his studies – *but really queen, why Venezuela?*

"I have the support of a few family members here..."

Most of Harold's family currently live in Venezuela. Thus, moving there and having their support was perfect for him. While Harold was starting a new chapter in his life and adapting to the country, Venezuela was feeling the effect of a newly elected president; with 50.6% of voters giving the presidency to Nicolás Maduro.



 **I KNEW I
WANTED TO BE A
TEACHER EVER
SINCE I WAS A
LITTLE BOY.**



"GIVING BACK HAS BECOME PART OF WHO I AM NOW."

Venezuela always had problems, but most of it was manageable to live a good life. However, with the election of President Maduro in 2013, the same year Harold moved to Venezuela, things started to become, "Really bad." It was no surprise that Venezuela has been struggling economically for years, due to the declining of oil prices; which had a huge impact on the social aspect of citizens. However, since the election, crime got higher, people got robbed and seeing people get murdered was just part of an everyday life you had to live.

"OF COURSE, I HAVE MY OWN EXPERIENCE WITH CRIME; I'VE BEEN ROBBED!"

Caracas and Valencia, two cities listed as cities where you are most likely to get murdered – did Harold have any chance of safety at all? Today, Harold looks back and is able to make jokes about it all. However, then it was a moment of shock where he feared for life. It was during a social event organized to give back to the community, "I remember they came in with guns in their hand and asked us to give them everything we had on us," they took his phone along with other belongings and ran away. Luckily, there were police officers nearby and was able to catch them before they were gone with everything. In the moment, his mind was just blank; he was still trying to figure out what was going on.

Living in Venezuela you experience and learn a lot of survival skills. It teaches you how to be more aware, how to act and how to be more conscious with what's going on around you.

"You can't just take out your cellphone in public here, you will lose it in no time."



You must over-analyze everything before heading out somewhere; lessoned learned for Harold.

In 2014, Harold discovered his passion for volunteering when they approach him to become president of a club that was transitioning from a club on campus to a community club, the Rotaract of Villa de Maracaibo, with the goal of helping people in need. Helping others was always part of Harold's character. This club also focuses on the development of young adults as leaders in their communities and workplaces.

"I KNOW FROM THE MOMENT I JOINED, I STARTED TO GROW"

He fell in love with the club and their goal; the idea that he could bring light and a smile to a person in need makes it all worth it for him,

"There is no price for bringing happiness and a smile to a child that is suffering from cancer."

Harold felt honored when they approached him to become the president. It made him realize that there are more people out there sharing the same passion he has; to give back to others. Harold was able to have a close eyesight to social problems and mental institution and hospitals in deteriorable state. The ability to organize events for his community made him grow and realize how fortunate he was.



I KNOW
THERE'S A LOT
OF ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL
PROBLEMS.
BUT, FOR NOW,
I'M STILL HERE.



There's surely a lot of violence and crime happening in Venezuela; food is hard to find and safety is a daily concern. But Harold has an immense love for what he is currently doing; it fulfills him enough to be able to push through the chaos. After graduating this summer, he decided to move out to become more independent. Harold currently resides in Barinas, where he is able to live a chill life with no life-threatening emergencies. He is an English teacher at an English Academy and, as of right now, he doesn't know what the future holds for him but says that, as a teacher, he's constantly learning, "I see myself moving abroad in the future. Unsure when or where, but I'd love to go for my Master's degree."

Update: Weeks after the interview, Harold confirms he will start online with his Master's degree in Educational Management at an University located in Barquisimeto, Venezuela.

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NATHALY & NICOLE RAS

“It takes two to take over Canada”

Meet the identical twin sisters that are taking over Canada, sort of. Nathaly and Nicole Ras were born in Aruba and, at the age of 21, are both studying Business Management at Seneca College in Toronto, Canada.

Moving and adapting to a country like Canada, where it's basically cold all-year-long, can be really tough – especially if you come from an island that is known for its never-changing hot, summer weather. Unsurprisingly, Canada is considered a modern, progressive, open and tolerant multi-cultural society with two official languages – English and French, making it an exciting and a spectacular destination for students all over the world.

In this fun Q&A, the sisters open up about growing up as twins, moving to Canada, and so much more!

FUN-FACTS:

+ NATHALY RAS:

- **Childhood nickname(s):** Nathy, Natita
- **Favorite Celebrity:** Zac Efron, Meryl Streep, Jenna Dewan, Channing Tatum
- **Favorite junk food:** McDonald's and Wendy's
- **Hobbies:** Go to the GYM, Dance and read books
- **One guilty Pleasure:** Peanut butter and Chocolate
- **Your music Anthem:** ADELE

+ NICOLE RAS:

- **Childhood nickname(s):** Nathy, Natita
- **Favorite Celebrity:** Channing Tatum, Demi Lovato, The Rock & Melisa
- **Favorite junk food:** McDonald's and Wendy's
- **Hobbies:** Gym, Play the Guitar and Sing
- **One guilty Pleasure:** French Fries & Ice cream
- **Your music Anthem:** Demi Lovato



GROWING UP AS TWINS:

- **WHAT IS IT LIKE TO CONSTANTLY BE AROUND ANOTHER HUMAN BEING WHO'S JUST LIKE YOU?**

Being around someone that is just like you is such a blessing. You have a built-in best friend; you have someone to share everything with. We stick up for each other and we have each other's back no matter what.

Growing up with someone that is just like you might be fun, but the sisters are well aware that at some point they will not be able to be as close as they have always been – especially when they enter the professional workforce. Though, neither sister want this time to arrive, they have certainly talked about this matter. The sisters added;

"We think it will be hard at first because we have been together since day one. One thing we know for sure is that even if we don't share the same house or live in the same country; our relationship and bond with each other will never change."

- **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY TOGETHER?**

To be honest, every single moment we spent together is special and adds up to the memories we have with each other. Every moment with each other is our favorite.

- **WHO TAKES LONGER TO GET READY?**

Nathaly: *"I can honestly say that I take much longer to get ready because I really like to take my time to plan and choose my outfit for the day, do my hair and makeup, and confirm that everything is perfect."* [Nicole agrees]

Nathaly might be the one who takes longer to get ready, but when it comes to flipping the pans in the kitchen, Nicole believes she does it better; *"I think I am the better cook. I am very creative in the kitchen as I enjoy trying new recipes."*

COMPLETE THIS STATEMENT:

"My twin sister is..."

Nathaly: *"My twin sister is the best part of me. She is the one that understands me and supports me no matter what. She is my best friend, my confidential, my support and guidance."*

Nicole: *"My twin sister is simply THE BEST!"*

COULD YOU SHARE YOUR FAVORITE QUOTE?

"The greatest gift our parents ever gave us was each other."



MOVING TO THE COUNTRY OF MAPLE SYRUP

• DID YOU ALWAYS WANT TO STUDY ABROAD?

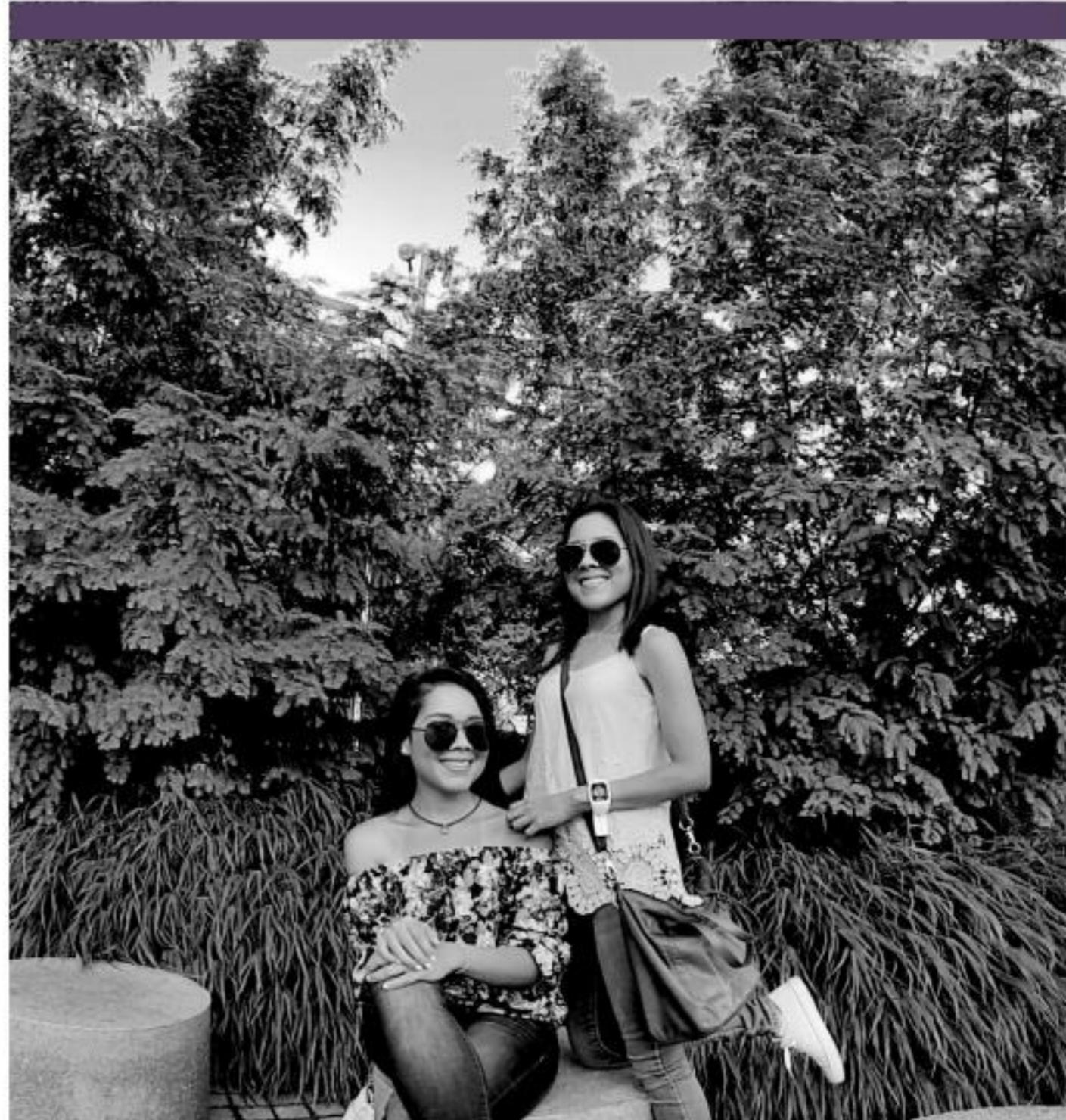
Nathaly: No – when I was younger, I did not picture myself studying abroad. However, during my student years at EPI, I realized that I would like to study abroad.

Nicole: Yes, because I knew that it would be a new and a unique experience.

The sisters preferred to live and study in Canada, not only because the country is considered safe and calm, but also because it is known for offering lots of great opportunities to people from all over the world. On the other hand, both Nathaly and Nicole seem to get tired of the insane cold weather every now and then,

"As island girls, we are not used to this kind of weather and you have to understand that it can become extremely cold for six straight months, specifically between October and April."

The sisters also agree that the traffic and the local tax rate remain their least favorite things about Canada.



• WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO STUDY BUSINESS MANAGEMENT?

Nathaly: I chose to study Business Management because the program offers me both theoretical and practical work. It also gives me the opportunity to explore every business area, from accountancy to marketing and sales.

Nicole: I chose this study because it offers me a variety of business areas. The study is diverse and after graduation – I can develop as a professional in different business fields.

After graduation, both Nathaly and Nicole want to pursue a master's degree in Business Management.

• WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR AN ARUBAN STUDENT THAT WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE WITH HIS/HER STUDIES ABROAD?

Nathaly: My advice for every single student that is planning to go study abroad would be to believe in yourself. Studying abroad brings new opportunities. You will learn to see life from a different perspective, you will become independent, and you will learn about new cultures and people. All I can say is that studying abroad is one of the best experiences you could ever have.

Nicole: My advice would be to not be scared of studying abroad or for the change of country. I can ensure you that it will be a unique and wonderful experience. You will become independent and mind opening. You will learn a lot about different cultures and people. It will be a new adventure – just make sure you are 100% confident in your decision and always keep your goals in mind and remain focused to reach them.



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THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF MIGRATING.

“Suddenly you just know; it is time to start something new and trust the magic of new beginnings”

Emigration – it's a word weighed down with a lot of meanings, a fact that I have no need to hammer down to immigrant readers. But aside from the link between emigration and poverty, the images of desolation that our collective memory has given us, it has richness in it. It is an opportunity to learn, and then to give, if you're willing to take it. That certainly, is my story.

It was clear to me that I would emigrate, even before I had graduated. I had long been fascinated with foreign travel and, during the years I used to work as a Nurse, it gave me a thirst for language learning and a network of friends from all over the world. I took it upon myself and in my mind it was clear – I was moving for experience, to learn, not necessarily to make my fortune.

But why migrate? One of the most significant reason is that a foreign culture may be more suitable to your personality, attitude, and beliefs. Many people are attracted to another country because they like the way they do things, their social codes and tradition, for example. It could be the way in which people interact with one another, or the music, the festivals and celebrations, the history, the art and not forgetting the food! It is wonderful to go and live abroad in order to be immersed in a culture that is extraordinary to you, where you can experience things that wouldn't be an offer at home.



Living abroad is an enriching experience, because it forces you to adapt to things that are unfamiliar and unusual to you. You become independent and open to new, exciting, or terrifying challenges that you would never have encountered in your home country. The most rewarding fact of it all is that you get the opportunity to learn and develop as a person; you will discover certain aspects about yourself that you may not have known before.

Through interacting with a foreign society, your eyes will be open to all sorts of aspects of life. It altered the core of who I thought I was and who I am now; living abroad changed me. You don't just change jobs or move a house, you do that and more. The scenery changes outside your window along with everything and everyone you once knew.

“For me, living abroad is one of the most satisfying and challenging task I have ever done.”

The impact on you is huge. You might not realize it immediately but one day you'll see it for what it is. You grow, evolve and move on. You face setbacks and you learn to deal with them on your own. You overcome obstacles, beat back the naysayers and you will have the scars to prove it. Some scars are good, some are bad, but nothing can ever be the same. The act of moving abroad makes you realize that "things" don't equal happiness. In fact, you start to redefine your original idea of success. However, one may have



the courage to do so, yet the other may not. That's why it is important for every parent, teacher, professor, advisor and employer to support making international experience an essential and affordable component of a well-rounded education. This means more flexible and accessible options, the barriers posed by financial need, disabilities, race and ethnicity and sexual orientation are crumbling. Therefore, excellent programs and inspiring role models should exist for every student.

SO, BY IMMIGRATING TO ANOTHER COUNTRY, YOU:

- 1. ARE EXPOSED TO A NEW LIFESTYLE;**
- 2. GET TO EMBRACE A NEW CULTURE;**
- 3. LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF;**
- 4. GAIN A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT;**
- 5. DEVELOP A POSITIVE MINDSET;**

In the end it doesn't really matter what the rest has to say, but what you heart and mind tells you to do. Then suddenly you just know, it is time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings.

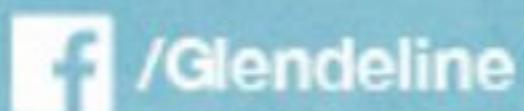
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PRONTO

Un perspectiva nobo saludando nos dushi Aruba. #GlendyLive



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.... Moge wijsheid en realiteitszin ons allen begeleiden
tijdens de Ronde Tafel Conferentie."

Tafel Conferentie



“TATA DI NOS PAIS ARUBA”

GILBERTO FRANCOIS “BETICO” CROES
25 Januari 1938 – 26 November 1986

**TER HERDENKING VAN
DE RONDE TAFEL CONFERENTIE
GEHOUDEN TE DEN HAAG
7 – 12 MAART 1983**

**Cas di Aruba
12 Maart 2003**



COVER FEATURE:

SUE-ANN KELLY ULRICH JACOBS

There's a total of 200 to 300 students who prepare themselves each year to move away and to pursue a higher education abroad. For most, the Netherlands is the destination. These students, often referred to as Bursalen, trust government officials with the preparations, financials and their moving plan. This year, over 11 students were left behind when they found out that their flight to the Netherlands was simply overbooked. Phryme Magazine was able to converse with Sue-ann Kelly who was comfortable sharing her experience with us.



Yurick Jacobs

A 22-year-old who was born and raised in Aruba and recently graduated Colegio E.P.I. Hospitality and Tourism Unit. He is currently living in The Hague where he is studying Nutrition and Dietetics at The Hague University of Applied Sciences.



“

THE EXECUTION WAS STRESSFUL AS THINGS WERE GETTING MORE AND MORE UNCLEAR AS THE BIG DAY APPROACHED.

- **WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO ATTEND H&T?**

After completing my MAVO, I wanted to continue to Colegio Arubano to get a HAVO diploma. However, this wasn't the case as I didn't score sufficient points to be allowed to the HAVO institute. My only options thereafter were night school, which at the time did not have all the courses I had to follow, or EPI. After considering my options at EPI, I landed on the Hospitality Unit; quickly put it became my only choice.

- **HOW WAS LIFE FOR YOU IN ARUBA?**

Life in Aruba was average; nothing too exciting ever happened. The people were lame. I had a few friends I spent most of my time with (they were not lame). I also volunteered at the Animal Shelter in Wayaca every weekend and played in a few metal, progressive and punk rock bands.

- **WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO CHOOSE THE NETHERLANDS AS YOUR STUDY DESTINATION?**

My original plan was to move to the United States after finishing my MAVO; I would have gone to live with relatives in New York City. But that was impossible, sadly. I ended up going to the Netherlands because of the relative ease of which the Dutch nationality allows someone to move here, so I took the leap.

- **HOW WAS THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE NETHERLANDS?**

The planning process was fine. The easiest half of everything, the execution was stressful as things were getting more and more unclear as the big day approached.



Ulrich is one of the 22 students who went through an unfortunate experience with the bursalen this year. Here's what Ulrich had to say:

“Funny story [this isn't a funny story]:

I receive an email from Arubaloan telling me I can pick up my flight ticket at their office. I head over, only to find out that I'm not flying with any of the bursalen groups. Instead, I'm flying with a separate group. However, they didn't know when or how this was going to happen. Flights were full and they didn't have any availability for us; I was told to wait.

Days pass until I get a call and get my ticket, I thought to myself, “Finally!” So, I get to the airport and meet with the group of students. Minister Hooyboer-Winklaar was there with some Arubahouse representatives to take pictures with the group and to wish us well. After the pictures were taken, they left while we continued to wait; hours go by and we don't hear anything about our flight. After the departure time, we get called by an airport representative and they told us that our flight to Curaçao is cancelled and we won't make the connection flight with KLM to go to the Netherlands. After that, we were all escorted to our baggage and were taken to the office of Insel Air; we were not given a solution – some of us started to ask what the next steps were. Instead, we were refunded the money for overweight charges and that's it; we got no further help, no compensation, no apology or anything – just a poor excuse. So, of course, we panicked and tried getting in touch with Arubaloan but we were not given any further information; we were just sent home and told to wait.

The next day, newspaper outlets and radio stations start to announce that all the students made it safe and sound to the Netherlands – which clearly wasn't true! There

“

Can you imagine?

THREE CANCELLED FLIGHTS IN ONE WEEK, GREAT.



were 22 students still stuck on Aruba with no answers. So, we created a group chat where we were able to communicate with each other and decided to share this incident to the public. We tried to contact Arubaloan again, but they didn't pick up. We then called the press, because we felt the public had to know. Lastly, we called the Aruba Parliament, who agreed to talk to us immediately after we said we were headed to the press.

We got a meeting with Mike Eman's right hand, whose name I have forgotten, Minister Juan Yrausquin, and a representative of the Education Department in Aruba. We presented our issues and were assured they'd be fixed. It wasn't until just before this meeting that we finally heard something about our flights; we were scheduled to fly the following Friday morning, on the 4th of August. Satisfied after the meeting we went to the press the next morning; we were not going to let this slide.

On Friday morning, we arrive at the airport and go through the standard airport procedures again. This time, we were flying with COPA Airlines to Panama and then KLM to the Netherlands. The representatives and minister were there with us for another picture and then they left. However, this flight got cancelled again due to a defect with the plane. The representatives called and we were told to move to the VIP section as a slight compensation while the minister and representatives were trying to find a solution. We got moved to a later flight with COPA airlines and that flight got cancelled as well. Can you imagine? Three cancelled flights in one week, great. This time COPA compensated the whole group with a hotel stay at Barceló and we were promised a flight the next morning.

It was Saturday morning, we were greeted by minister Yrausquin and the representatives who escorted us through the airport by VIP staff to the plane. We were finally able to fly to Panama and take a connection flight with KLM to the Netherlands. After all the stress, tears and panic, we finally made it to the Netherlands.”

- **HOW IS YOUR LIFE IN THE NETHERLANDS DIFFERENT COMPARED TO THE ONE IN ARUBA?**

Everything is exciting, the freedom is grand. The ability to do so much at any given time. This is exactly what I wanted from moving here.

- **HOW IS YOUR EDUCATION GOING?**

Could be going better, but still averaging good grades in school. All in all, I cannot complain.

- **HOW DID THE BURSALEN EXPERIENCE IMPACT YOUR LIFE IN THE NETHERLANDS?**

Negative impact would be the lack of a proper welcome program. Positive impact is that I am just glad to be here already

- **DO YOU SEE YOURSELF GOING BACK TO ARUBA AFTER YOUR EDUCATION?**

No, I plan to do more while in Europe. Build my experience and/or study another subject.

- **WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE IN THE NEAR FUTURE?**

Everything I want and more. Travel, my Propaedeutic in year 1 and my diploma at the end of it all. Many experiences and stories to reminisce about while I am old and gray.





“FORGET ABOUT THE CRAZY ATTACKS FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THIS HARDER. LOOK FORWARD AND KEEP CHASING YOUR DREAMS.”



Sue-Ann Kelly

A 23-year-old, who recently graduated Colegio E.P.I. as a Social Care Worker. In Aruba, she used to live in Tamarijn, Paradera. She has just moved to The Hague in August of 2017 and is now studying Pedagogy at The Hague University of Applied Sciences.



• WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NETHERLANDS?

It has always been a thought for me. Aruba, unfortunately, does not have a variety of choices when it comes to bachelor studies. I always wanted to pursue a higher education abroad. I've attended many lectures from the University of Aruba, I've had my doubts of whether or not to stay in Aruba and study to become a Social Worker, or if to come to the Netherlands and study Pedagogy. So yes, it's something I've always planned to do, but did have my doubts between the two.

• WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE IN THE HAGUE?

I had a friend who would visit Aruba and told me about The Hague. While listening to her, I felt interested by the way she was speaking about the city. This made me curious to find out for my own. That's how I started with researching for studies in The Hague and Utrecht. But, ultimately, I liked The Hague more.

Sue-Ann, like many others, decided to apply for the Aruba-loan and choose the Startpakket option, because she thought it would be very handy. Sue-Ann adds that the Education Department in Aruba is trying to become more

digitalized however it was a, "Struggle because the website was constantly down; certain information or requirements were hard to understand." For the Netherlands, she had to use Studielink and Osiris, which was a total hassle and very confusing for her. However, once she got the hang of it, it went rather fast.

This year, the bursalen had to fly to the Netherlands on the 31st of July. But, Sue-Ann got a call in Aruba that the flight she was supposed to be on was overbooked. Therefore, she was told to be on stand-by and that they would arrange another flight as soon as possible. Once she got to the airport, they were able to check-in and pass through security. but, later that day, Sue-Ann was told that the flight was cancelled and had to go home.

Between then and the 4th of August, it was constant back and forth for them; flights being cancelled four times in a row to constantly having to say their goodbyes to their loved ones, only to find out later that they had to go home and go back to the airport in the morning.

"At some point, I was thinking to just stay in Aruba. Some people would think that's a childish attitude. But, this situation was extremely exhausting, especially since we were depending on Aruba officials to handle and manage our whole move to the Netherlands."

Luckily, Juan David Yrausquin, the former Plenipotentiary minister of Aruba, and former Minister of Education, Family Policy and Adult Education, Michelle Hooyboer-Winkelar, was there for support and tried to handle the situation.

While some of the bursalen was able to fly the same day, Sue-Ann couldn't but eventually, she was able to fly to the Netherlands on the 4th of August 2017.

IT WAS ABOUT TWENTY
WHO HAD TO STAY IN
ARUBA AND COULDN'T
FLY TO THE NETHER-
LANDS WITH THE REST
OF THE BURSALEN; IT
WAS FRUSTRATING.





- **WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO NOT GIVE UP AND STILL GO TO THE NETHERLANDS?**

Because I want a degree. I wanted to experience for myself how life would be in the Netherlands, how it would be to go to a completely different school, to be on your own, to be outside your comfort zone. Because people usually frame the Netherlands in a way, but once you are here it's entirely different. I did this for myself, so that I can say that I tried it out and know how it's like.

- **DID ARRIVING LATE TO THE NETHERLANDS HAVE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT?**

We weren't able to follow the program that the "Opgang Comissie," set up. For those who don't know, they are responsible for arranging the arrivals of the bursalen and to ensure that the bursalen settle in the Netherlands successfully. I wasn't able to get housing on time, so for the first few days I had to stay with one of the leaders from the committee. This meant that I also couldn't register to the Municipality since I didn't have my own apartment. Which meant that I couldn't get a BSN number, I couldn't open a bank account, etc.

Today, four months after the unfortunate incident, Sue-Ann lives in her apartment that she says it's, "Way too expensive, it's ridiculous," and goes to school daily. When asked Sue-Ann if The Hague met her expectations she said,

"Quite honestly, I expected something entirely different - I thought that I could do it, that it would be a different place and environment and that it would be great. However, life in the Netherlands is very different."

You have to take the tram and walk a lot! Money is also a situation, because you have to budget and prioritize yourself very well; you depend a lot on financial."

Sue-Ann shares that she doesn't think that living in the Netherlands is for her. She elaborated that she doesn't like the environment in the Netherlands and that she liked it for vacationing, but definitely not to live.

- **WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR YOU?**

Right now, I am not sure what I am going to do. Whether I will stay in this study, change or move away. This current study is interesting and it's what I would like to do, because I want to work with people. But right now it's too early to say whether or not I will change of study.

Till this date, Sue-Ann did not receive an apology for those responsible of the setback she had to personally face in Aruba. Sue-Ann hopes that the officials in Aruba could learn from this situation and better prepare themselves in the future when organising the move for the bursalen.

A woman with curly hair, wearing a dark hoodie, is smiling and looking down. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a backstage area with equipment and lighting stands.

“I believe you have to do something you feel comfortable doing. Sometimes we make decisions without knowing what to expect and that is normal because you can never know what to expect. But I try to give it my all and push on.”

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Photographer: Shandrick de Cuba
Interviewer: Jose E. Kock
Location: Rotterdam, the Netherlands

The best advice he has ever received was,

"YOU CAN DO IT."

SINGLE MALE

Steven Benavides

- **NAME:** Gabriel Estiven Benavides Castro;
- **BIRTHDATE:** 13 June 1991;
- **EDUCATION:** Registered Nurse;
- **UNIVERSITY:** Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences;
- **CITY:** The Hague;
- **HEIGHT:** 1,77.



- His celebrity crush is Camilla Luddington!
- Since he learns a lot about diseases, his biggest fear is becoming chronically ill and losing his health.
- His favorite song of 2017 is Tadow by FKJ & Masego and he adds, *"The way that saxophone sounds is just amazing!"*
- His biggest pet peeve is waiting.
- One word to describe his personality would be: sociable.
- The most embarrassing thing he has ever worn is a really bright green-blue short that he has gotten as a present, *"I had nothing to wear, so I had to wear it once."*
- He would sum up his internet browser history with, *"Trust me, you don't want to know."*
- The best purchase he has ever made was a really good and cheap-priced bicycle.
- The worst purchase he has ever made was ordering food and not getting what he expected, *"Painful!!"*
- He believes that our body is a perfect creation of God, and wouldn't want to lose anything about it, *"I'm happy the way I am."*
- He would describe his group of friends as family; they take care and motivate each other to be better versions of themselves.
- He doesn't believe he would change anything in his life, *"I think the mistakes that I've made, made me to the person that I am today."*
- His role models are his parents, Tony Robbins & Cristiano Ronaldo.
- He imagines his soulmate as, *"A loving, caring, woman with a good sense of humor."*

“Per aspera ad astra”

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**“GOOD, BETTER, BEST,
NEVER LET IT REST. ‘TIL
YOUR GOOD IS BETTER AND
YOUR BETTER IS BEST.”**

SINGLE FEMALE

Lisiana Kock



- **NAME:** Lisiana D.H.D. Kock;
- **BIRTHDATE:** 19 October 1996;
- **EDUCATION:** Commercial Economy;
- **UNIVERSITY:** The Hague University of Applied Science;
- **CITY:** The Hague;
- **HEIGHT:** 1,63.

- Her favorite artist is Chris Brown and her song of all time is Autumn Leaves!
- Her biggest fear is failing;
- Her biggest pet peeve is mouth noises or chewing with mouth open;
- She would rather always be hot than cold;
- The most embarrassing thing she has ever worn was, "A minion onesie to the grocery store."
- If she could have three wishes granted, she would choose: to find a cure for cancer, to travel the world without any cost and to be a role model for women;
- Worst purchase she has ever made was, "A cheap umbrella that broke like two hours later."
- Best purchase she has ever made was her iPhone 8 plus.
- Her favorite activity to do on vacation is to explore and get to know the history of the place, to take beautiful pictures and to, "Shop till I drop."
- She would describe her group of friends as, "I wouldn't change them for the world."
- She would describe her dream job as Chief Executive Officer of a Marketing Company;
- Her biggest role model is her mother because, "She's a hardworking, dedicating, and loving mom and dad."
- The best advice she has ever received was by her older brother, "A setback is never a bad experience, just another one of life's lessons."
- She would describe her soulmate as, "Faithful, trusting, adventurous, fun and understanding."



LIFE IN A STUDENT HOUSE

it's not as bad as you think! „



Like many Aruban students who move to the Netherlands in the summer to begin the so called 'best period of their lives', I too dreamed of what life would be like in the Netherlands. And, just like almost every single student who moves to the Netherlands, I spent my summer looking for a room.

Some kids dreamed about moving to Amsterdam, Rotterdam, or The Hague, but I dreamed about moving to Tilburg. I had friends who were studying in Tilburg, the university I wanted to attend was in Tilburg and I had family members who had studied in Tilburg and they remembered the city with great fondness.

So, there I was behind my laptop in the kitchen on a hot Aruban afternoon looking for a place to live. I was leaving in two weeks, so I had to find something, and I had to find it quickly. I stumbled across this small room in a nice-looking student house in a good neighborhood. I remember thinking that it looked like a decent room, not too big and not too small.

I arranged a room tour a couple of days after I arrived. The room the landlord showed me seemed much smaller than the room I had originally seen on the website. He later explained to me that the room I wanted had been rented out already and that this room was the only one available. I really needed a room, so I decided to take what I was being offered.

When Aruban students first come to the Netherlands they think they can make demands when it comes to rooms, "I want two big windows, my own bathroom, my own toilet and I want the kitchen from 5 to 8 all to myself. Furthermore, I would like a jacuzzi and two puppies to lighten up my sad life. If possible, have my mentor arrange it for me."

Breaking news: You aren't really in a position to make demands. Especially if you've just gotten here and expect that somehow the room of your dreams is going to fall on your lap for 200 euros a month.

I don't want you to get me wrong on this. It's perfectly fine to know what you want, but don't tell me you want to live in a student house and have the same benefits you'd have if you lived in a studio. It's not realistic.

Anyway, I accepted the room for a little less than I was going to pay for the room I first wanted with the promise that I would get a bigger room as soon as one became available. However, at that point I had a much bigger worry than the room. I was worried about the common areas in the house. The kitchen was a mess and the roof terrace represented how I was feeling: puzzled; there were beer bottles everywhere and it looked as if



the dishes hadn't been done the whole summer. At that point I could do two things: 1. Call my parents and complain about how miserable my life was and request the two puppies I mentioned above or 2. I could make it my mission to clean the mess up. I chose the latter. I'm terribly awful at bitching when I can change the situation.

So, there I was, cleaning every single corner of the kitchen, washing every single pan, plate, and glass. I didn't stop until I thought it was clean enough for me to live comfortably. I was doing all that while listening to Little Talks by Of Monsters And Men.

What followed the coming weeks was a domino effect. As my housemates started arriving one by one after the long summer break, they began to remove old posters and clean up their own messes. I lived in a house of seven, four of us were new that summer and all seven of us had a vision for the house. We were bound to set rules and work together.

Next thing I know, we were having house meetings and tackling issues like the dishes, the roof terrace, and the showers. We didn't always see eye to eye, but the communication was efficient, and it made things work.

We began organizing parties at home and celebrating events like Sinterklaas together. Three academic years in and I love living in a student house. My housemates became my sisters and my brothers away from home, and I can count on them just like they can count on me. Even though many of the housemates who were living here when I first moved in left, the vision we had for our house remains and it is passed on to our newest housemates.

Not everything in a student house consists of roses and daisies. I know many students who didn't find what they were looking for in a student house. Others never tried it because they're scared of embarking on an experience like that. Living in a student house isn't for everyone, I'll give you that. That's why I made a list of 5 pros and 5 cons of living in a student house, that way you can judge for yourself.



JOSH'S PROS AND CONS OF LIVING IN A STUDENT HOUSE:

CONS:

1. When you take more than two minutes in the toilet everyone knows you're not peeing.
2. You must deal with people early in the morning.
3. When the kitchen's packed, you have to patiently wait for your turn to cook.
4. Some people listen to shitty music and you have to deal with it (in the common areas).
5. You don't always get to choose who moves in, so you must have an open mind to new ideas and customs.

PROS:

1. You get to do fun things with your housemates, like go karting, throw parties and have movie nights.
2. If you're ever broke or you just don't feel like cooking, chances are that you can eat with one of your housemates.
3. You can count on one of your housemates to help you with a subject you don't really understand or to advice you on academic matters.
4. Can't wall mount a tv? Can't carry your new fridge upstairs on your own? Someone's there to help.
5. Your Dutch is going to improve greatly. You won't just learn the usual academic vocabulary they teach at school, instead you'll learn colloquial Dutch.



There are several other pros and cons, but truth be told sometimes living in a student house can be as good or as bad as you make it. It all comes down to how you interact with others. You know what they say: "if you can't change the situation, change your attitude, or just don't move into a student house at all". Alright, I'm not sure if anybody says that, I just made it up.

Before you move into a student house you must take a good look at your personality. Analyze yourself, think about what you like, what you don't like, and what you want to get out of an experience like that. Are you an extrovert or an introvert?

To live in a student house, you must be open to cultural differences. And by cultural differences I mean ALL cultural differences. You must be open to the Dutch culture as well. Which is a mistake many Aruban students make when they first come to the Netherlands. And I say this because many times I hear Arubans speak of Dutch people with a certain tone of superiority. "Can you believe they jump when they dance?" Yes, I can and honestly it doesn't bother me half as much as your unnecessary comment about other people's way of dancing.



Be open to share your culture with others and don't be oversensitive about people asking you where you come from. People will ask questions that may seem unnecessary to you and they will want to know things about your culture that you might find obvious. Don't take offense. It simply means that they're interested to get to know you as a person, which is a good thing, especially if you're going to be sharing a house together.

This is going to be my third year living in a student house and up till this day, some of my housemates still think it's weird that I eat fried plantains with my food and I still think it's weird when they usually only use salt and pepper to season their chicken. But at the end of the day, we learn from each other and we grow together. But by far, the most fun thing about living in a student house is that there's always someone who cares about how your day went.



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FRANSI FRANS: AN ARUBAN BREAKING THE WEIGHTLIFTING RECORDS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Fransi is a modest and intelligent 21-year-old who studies to become a Biology teacher at Fontys University of Applied Sciences in Tilburg. Fransi has been living in the Netherlands for two years and enjoys the simple things in life like watching Air Crash Investigation on Discovery Channel and eating pancakes on a Sunday morning. But there are two activities that characterize Fransi like no other: CrossFit and weightlifting.

JOSH: I've known Fransi for about three years and we've grown very close in the last two years. I have known for a while now that Fransi is a champ when it comes to workouts, but other than that I never knew what CrossFit or weightlifting was all about. So, on a rainy fall evening we sat together with two cups of hot chocolate to talk about one thing and one thing only: CrossFit and weightlifting.

- **HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING CROSSFIT?**

I've been doing CrossFit for two years and a half. Six months in Aruba and two years here in the Netherlands.

JOSH: All right, so I always believed that CrossFit is this kind of workout where you use your own body strength to work out instead of machines like it's done at the gym. And in my mind weightlifting is a part of CrossFit. As an outsider I think it looks like a very intimidating sport.

FRANSI: CrossFit and weightlifting are two different sports. Many girls do CrossFit, but there aren't many girls that do weightlifting. The difference between CrossFit and weightlifting is that when you're doing CrossFit you can adjust the weights to fit your workout's needs. Weightlifting is more of a competition, because it's all about the weight, so you must train your body to be able to handle more weight, that's kind of the whole point. Weightlifting existed long before CrossFit. CrossFit is a fairly new concept and it incorporated weightlifting in its regimen.

- **WHAT MADE YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH CROSSFIT AND WEIGHTLIFTING?**

At the beginning I was curious to see how much my body could take. It was a type of competitiveness with myself. And that's still what I love about CrossFit today. Other than that, I like that it's an inclusive sport, so instead of just challenging myself I can compete with others as well.

- **DO YOU THINK THAT THAT COMPETITIVENESS INTIMIDATES PEOPLE WHO DON'T DO CROSSFIT?**

Of course. I can imagine someone being intimidated by the competitiveness and saying, "*I'd never be able to keep up. Everyone's going to beat me at this.*" It's true that most people who do CrossFit are competitive. But, in my experience, people who do CrossFit are also there to help. It's a community where everyone wants to see you succeed.

JOSH: Let's say I have my first CrossFit training tomorrow. I get there and then what? I'd have no idea what to do!

FRANSI: You're going to be introduced to the group. You chit chat a little with the group and then you're going to start your workout. The coach is going to explain to you what kind of workout you're doing that day, because there's a different workout every day. He'll help you pick weights that you're comfortable with and will teach you some techniques to get the best out of your workout.

- **SO, THERE'S NO REASON TO BE INTIMIDATED?**

Not at all. CrossFit is very beginners friendly. People there are going to appreciate that you tried and they're going to cheer you on. Just be open to try new things. Come with an open mind and ready to learn.

JOSH: You told me at the beginning of our conversation that you were doing CrossFit for six months before you came to the Netherlands. Somewhere along the way you became a weightlifting champion here in the Netherlands. That's mind-blowing.

- **HOW DOES THAT HAPPEN?**

I worked out six days a week when I was in Aruba and I competed a few times, which helped me understand how weightlifting competitions work. When I came to the Netherlands I immediately signed up for CrossFit and weightlifting and during my first year here I participated in six weightlifting competitions. Because I trained so hard when I was in Aruba, by the time I came to the Netherlands I had a clear idea of what my strengths and weaknesses were when it came to weightlifting. Developing a strong mental game is very important. I had a coach from Curacao and he competed many times here in the Netherlands, so he knew the weightlifting scene well. When an opportunity came up for a team competition, he signed me and a few others up to compete as a group. That was the first time I broke a record.

- **WHAT DOES SNATCH, CLEAN AND JERK MEAN?**

Snatch is when you hold your bar with a wider grip. You raise the bar in one movement while you go into a squat position to help pull the weight up. You finish the snatch standing up straight with the weight overhead. With the clean and jerk you hold your bar with a narrower grip and you raise the bar with two movements instead of one. First you go into a squat position with the weight just above your chest, resting on your shoulder and afterwards you push the weight up.

- **WHAT DO THESE RECORDS MEAN TO YOU AS AN ARUBAN BREAKING DUTCH RECORDS?**

Well, it makes me proud, but it also gets me thinking. I think Arubans should do more CrossFit, because most Arubans are physically very strong people. I think they should promote sports like CrossFit and weightlifting in Aruba to make it more attractive for Arubans. Other than that, I think they should make the sport more attractive for girls, because many Arubans think it's a men's sport.



I FIRST BROKE THE RECORD IN THE NETHERLANDS WITH BY WEIGHTLIFTING 63KG AND LATER BROKE MY OWN RECORD BY LIFTING 67KG. WITH THE CLEAN AND JERK, I FIRST BROKE THE RECORD BY LIFTING 76KG AND I LATER BROKE THAT SAME RECORD BY LIFTING 83KG.



- **DO YOU GET A LOT OF COMMENTS THAT YOU'RE A GIRL DOING WEIGHTLIFTING?**

Yes. Many people are surprised that I can carry so much weight. When they hear how much I can carry they go: "But you're a girl and you're so short!"

- **DOES IT BOTHER YOU?**

Not really. I think I can do whatever I set my mind to. I'm aware that there's a stereotype that men are strong, and women are, well, 'less-strong'. I think that the reason many women don't challenge that idea is because they believe it and because they see weightlifting as un-ladylike. I strongly believe that you CAN be ladylike and still slay when it comes to weightlifting. I don't want to brag, but I can carry more weight than some guys doing weightlifting, which comes to show that it is possible to show physical strength as a woman and still be ladylike.

- **DO YOU THINK WOMEN HAVE TO PROVE THEMSELVES TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY WHEN THEY'RE DOING SPORTS LIKE WEIGHTLIFTING?**

From a biological perspective, women don't have the physical capabilities of a man – we don't have that kind of muscle power. We might have to work out a little harder if we want to beat a guy, but that's not what it's about. A guy might be able to lift 120 kilos and I might lift 90 kilos. But, for me, 90 kilos is the equivalent of 120 kilos for a guy. And let me tell you something, I'm proud that I can lift those 90 kilos.

- **WHAT KIND OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO START DOING CROSSFIT?**

Go with an open mind. Don't be scared and don't limit yourself. Be open to try new things and impress yourself. No one's going to laugh at you for trying. But most importantly, don't give up and get demotivated when the workouts get hard, because you can do it.

- **WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU? WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON RIGHT NOW?**

Well, I broke those records when I was 20. I'm 21 now, so I'm in a different competition category now, which means I must compete with people who have broken higher records than I did when I was 20. What I want to do right now is break all the records in the 21-year-old category; I want to break as many records as possible – I want to put Aruba's name out there!

- **WHAT MESSAGE DO YOU WANT TO GET OUT THERE FOR THOSE READING THIS ARTICLE?**

I want girls of all ages reading this to know that you should never think that sports like CrossFit and weightlifting are manly. Strong muscles don't make you any less of a woman. Don't let anything limit you, because women are being overshadowed by men all the time with the idea that they can do better than us, but we can do a whole lot as well and we should be confident and proud of our abilities.

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THE CHARM OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN
CALLED TO MY
ADVENTUROUS SELF
AND I COULDN'T
REFUSE.

> SUMMER SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

MY GREEK EXPERIENCE

My name is Sinhya Ridderstaat, I'm 28 years young and currently a fourth year Organization, Governance and Management student at the University of Aruba. As a person, I always strive for the better and I try to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible. Therefore, when I found out there was the chance for me to go to a Summer School program of my choice I jumped at the opportunity.

The journey started by simply googling Summer Schools in Europe for cultural studies, ethnic studies, anthropology, and research because that's what I'm passionate about. Out of all the choices available, the one that spoke the most to me was the "Konitsa Summer School" in Greece.

Yes Greece, as an island girl of the Caribbean, the charm of the Mediterranean called to my adventurous self and I couldn't refuse. In addition, I believed going to Greece to do research, would help give me a different perspective on culture, an insight into anthropology, as well as the opportunity to meet people from around the world. I do have to mention for as excited as I was, I was very nervous to travel

alone, to a place I knew no-one and knew basically nothing about. Therefore, I made sure I had an offline google map of the places I was going to, the bus schedules, a translating app (just in case), I made sure I only had one piece of luggage. In other words, I tried to be as prepared as possible.

As I mentioned before the summer school was in Konitsa Greece, it's a town of Ioannina in the Epirus region of Greece; near the border of Albania and the Republic of Macedonia. It's built on the slope of the Pindos Mountain and continues into a valley, where you can see the agricultural development. Konitsa is known to tourist for its hiking trails, rafting in the river Aoos, paragliding, and for different springs in the area.

The summer course consisted of two weeks, the first week was filled with theory and exercises outside the classroom and the second week was to do fieldwork. One of the most memorable classes was a sensorial approach to everyday life; in which we took a silent walk down the hill in Konitsa towards the river of Aoos. It was a memorable class because we had to walk in silence and just listen to the surroundings; I remember the birds, the leaves rattling with the breeze, the steps of over 30 people walking on the pavement, and the water rushing and splashing as we reached the river. In addition,



swimming in the river was awesome because the water was around 15 degrees and the water is so fresh my skin and hair never looked so good. We also visited two feasts in the area. Seeing other people living and loving their culture, seeing them express their identities is unforgettable.

There was food, drinks, local folk music, and people from different ages and different cultural backgrounds dancing together and enjoying culture. Furthermore, I cannot exclude the student experiences in Konitsa.

Every night we were in Konitsa we would go to the town center to a bar, café style of the Netherlands, we would drink, talk, laugh, and dance. Something that caught my attention was how we got food for buying drinks, every table had a snack platter to accompany the drinks, so we could keep going till early morning.

By the way if you enjoy drinks, I recommend trying the Tsiropou; a brandy made with the residue of wine presses. After the summer school I spent four days in Thessaloniki, visited two museums, and went exploring for art and historical monuments.

The summer of 2017 is one I will never forget, it was filled with adventures and goals accomplished. Traveling alone taught me to enjoy my own company, to pursue my dreams, and even when I stand alone I am never truly alone because I'll always have people to share the experience with. This experience challenged me to get out of my comfort zone and in a sense made me stronger in my character, more critical, more driven, and ready to further my career development. Greece made me see that most cultures share similar threads and that differences and similarities should be celebrated. As I go to my final Bachelor year I am excited to do a research for Aruba that will hopefully be a step forward for cultural policies.

Lastly, I like to encourage students to make use of their opportunities to travel and see as much of the world as possible. Gain as much knowledge as you can, because those experiences will help you reach your potential one experience at a time. We are all capable of greatness it just takes a step of courage.

Pinyme.

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